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Message Text

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43
ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 EB-07

COME-00 TRSE-00 AGR-05 OPIC-03 XMB-02 CG-00 DOTE-00

AID-05 INT-05 /080 W
---------- 083018
R 251200Z AUG 75
FM AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3809
INFO WMEMBASSY BLANTYRE 894
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MBABANE
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LOURENCO MARQUES 924

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ECON, EFIN, ELAB, MZ
SUBJECT: SHIPPING VOLUME IN LOURENCO MARQUES PORT DECLINES DRASTICALLY

1. STEVEDORE WOES - JOSE DINIZ LOPES, ACCOUNTANT FOR A LOCAL SHIP REPAIRING AND CLEANING FIRM AND HUSBAND OF POST EMPLOYEE, REPORTED TO POST ON CONDITIONS IN LOURENCO MARQUES PORT. DUE TO APPARENT FEAR OF SOUTH AFRICAN MERCHANTS AND SHIPPERS TO SEND THEIR GOODS THROUGH THE PORT OF LOURENCO MARQUES, SHIPPING VOLUME AT THE PORT IS DRASTICALLY BELOW NORMAL. ALL LAST WEEK FOUR TO FIVE SHIPS UNLOADED CARGO IN LOURENCO MARQUES COMPARED TO A NORMAL 25 TO 30, APPROXIMATELY 100 TO 120 STEVEDORES PER SHIFT ARE NOW EMPLOYED COMPARED TO PREVIOUS AVERAGE OF 1000 TO 1200. IN ORDER TO AVOID POSSIBLE TROUBLE FROM LARGE GATHERINGS OF UNHAPPY AND UNEMPLOYED STEVEDORES, THEY MUST NOW TRAVEL TO AN AFRICAN SUBURB OF LOURENCO MARQUES TO FIND OUT IF THEY HAVE WORK FOR THAT DAY. MR. LOPES STATED THERE IS
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MUCH DISSATISFACTION AMONG STEVEDORES.

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2. INEPTNESS AT PORT - MR. LOPES REPORTED THE PROCESSING OF CARGO IN LOURENCO MARQUES PORT IS COMPLICATED BY THE FOLLOWING COMEDY OF ERRORS:

A) THINGS LOOK BLACK ON THE COAL LOADING STATION BECAUSE AN OPERATOR EMPTIED A RAIL CAR FULL OF COAL ONTO THE PLATFORM INSTEAD OF ON TO THE SHIP. THE COAL LOADING STATION IS EXPECTED TO BE UNUSABLE FOR SIX WEEKS.

B) PROSPECTS SOURED AT THE SUGAR LOADING STATION, WHEN OPERATORS REFUSED TO DO ROUTINE MAINTENANCE ON THE TUBES CARRYING THE SUGAR TO THE SHIP. THE TUBES ARE NOW BLOCKED AND NO SUGAR CAN BE LOADED UNTIL THE TUBES ARE CLEANED.

C) THE THREE CLASSES OF OPERATORS OF THE CARGO CRANES IN THE PORT ARE NO LONGER WHOOPING. FORMERLY, THE MOST SOPHISTICATED WORK WAS ASSIGNED TO THE MOST EXPERIENCED WORKERS. THE OPERATORS DECIDED THEY NO LONGER LIKED THIS SYSTEM AND ASSIGNED THE LEAST EXPERIENCED PEOPLE TO RUN THE CRANES. FIFTEEN OF THE 75 CRANES ARE NOW OUT OF ORDER.

D) HOPES OF KEEPING THE HARBOR CHANNEL OPEN SUNK WITH A DREDGE WHICH IS NOW RESTING ON THE BOTTOM OF LOURENCO MARQUES HARBOR. SOMEONE OPENED THE WRONG VALVE AND FILLED THE HOLDS WITH WATER. A SOUTH AFRICAN COMPANY HAS BEEN HIRED TO RAISE THE SHIP.

3. RAIL TROUBLES - THE RAILWAY AUTHORITIES ARE SO SHORT OF OPERATING REVENUE THAT THEY HAVE GONE TO ALL LOCAL COMPANIES WHICH USE THE PORT AND RAILWAY FACILITIES TO COLLECT INVOICES FOR THE CURRENT MONTH. THESE INVOICES ARE USUALLY NOT DUE UNTIL THE 15TH OF THE MONTH FOLLOWING. LOPES STATED THAT EVEN WITH THIS ADVANCE COLLECTION THE PORT AUTHORITY STILL WILL NOT HAVE ENOUGH MONEY TO MEET ITS PAYROLL FOR THE MONTH.

4. OTHER PORTS - LOPES REPORTED THE CONDITIONS IN BEIRA AND NACALA ARE EXCELLENT. BEIRA HAS COPPER FROM ZAMBIA AND TOBACCO AND CORN FROM RHODESIA WAITINGSTO BE LOADED. THE VOLUME OF SHIPPING IN BEIRA IS REPORTEDLY CONTINUING AT PREVIOUS LEVELS.

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TM PORT SURCHARGE IN LOURENCO MARQUES AND BEIRA WAS REDUCED AUGUST 22 FROM 30 PERCENT TO 15 PERCENT.
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